

# HAGIOGRAPHY SOCIETY

## An Important Message About the Hagiography Society Mailing List

Dear All,

As many of you know, we have been moving our listserv/email announcement list from one system to another this past week, and it has been a challenge. The problems have to do, in large part, with the security measures that institutions have created to limit malicious attacks. This security often filters out benign messages—and that is why some of you may be hearing about this mailing list change for the first time here (my messages to many of you about the switch were returned to me as undeliverable for security reasons).

I am deeply grateful to you all for your patience and persistence as we make this change. If you have received an email from me, but have not acted on it, please do so now. We will be using the new mailing list exclusively from September 1 on. If you have not received an email from me, please write to me at [avo2n@virginia.edu](mailto:avo2n@virginia.edu) to ask to be put on the new mailing list.

I would also ask that all members add the following addresses to their contacts now to allow smooth communication as we move forward (instructions for adding contacts can be found at <https://www.computerhope.com/issues/ch000860.htm>):

- [communications@hagiographysociety.org](mailto:communications@hagiographysociety.org)
- [mailinglist@hagiographysociety.org](mailto:mailinglist@hagiographysociety.org)
- [outreach@hagiographysociety.org](mailto:outreach@hagiographysociety.org)
- [secretary@hagiographysociety.org](mailto:secretary@hagiographysociety.org)
- [no.reply@oneandone.com](mailto:no.reply@oneandone.com)

Thank you again so much for your help in this effort.

Amy Ogden  
Secretary-Treasurer, Hagiography Society

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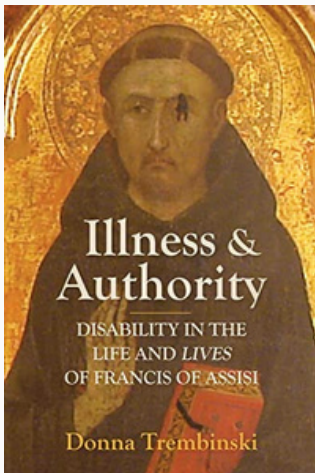
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## HAGIOGRAPHY SOCIETY BOOK PRIZE 2022

The Hagiography Society is delighted to announce that the 2022 Book Prize has been awarded to Donna Trembinski, Associate Professor of History at St. Francis Xavier University (Nova Scotia, Canada) for her book *Illness and Authority: Disability in the Life and Lives of Francis of Assisi* (University of Toronto Press, 2020). We warmly congratulate Professor Trembinski for this exceptional achievement. We also offer our heartfelt thanks to the panel of judges who generously shared their expertise and time to evaluate the books published in 2020 and 2021 that were submitted for the prize. The scholars who served on the judging committee included Professors Felice Lifshitz (Women's and Gender Studies, University of Alberta, Canada), Gábor Klaniczay (Medieval Studies, Central European University, Hungary), and Sally Poor (Department of German, Princeton University, New Jersey). Here is their statement regarding Professor Trembinski's book:



This is a path-breaking study that throws new light on the interpretation of the life and the hagiographic portrait of the most studied medieval saint, while clearly demonstrating the value of disability as a category of historical analysis. With a systematic critical examination of the voluminous hagiographic dossier of Saint Francis, the author points out that his various illnesses played a much more central role in his life than has been recognized by the ample scholarship on him. She uncovers from the contradictory testimonies the trustworthy “reality” of an almost continuous state of infirmity of Francis since his youth. Seen in this light, this state played a far greater role in his decision to resign from the formal direction of the order he had founded than has been recognized. The reasons why and the details of how Francis’ hagiographers minimized and obscured the memory of the various infirmities of the saint are also convincingly deciphered. The author boldly concludes that Saint Francis’s state of disability prompted him to develop a unique kind of spiritual authority, indeed, as Trembinski suggests, a “feminine mode” of exercising power.

### UPCOMING ESSAY AND BOOK PRIZES

In 2023, the Hagiography Society will award its first article prize for an essay published in either 2021 or 2022. The next book prize will be awarded in 2024 for a scholarly first book published in either 2022 or 2023. For eligibility requirements and more information about these prizes, please visit [hagiography.com](http://hagiography.com)



## Election Results

We are happy to announce that Amy Ogden has been elected to another three-year term as Secretary Treasurer of the Hagiography Society. Catherine Mooney and Laura Smoller have been jointly elected to a three-year term as President. Cathy will serve in the first year and then hand over the reins to Laura in 2023.

### Attendance and Views of Hagiography Society Sessions at ICMS 2022

The Hagiography Society sponsored four sessions at the May 2022 International Congress on Medieval Studies. Three of the sessions were recorded and made available for viewing after the live sessions ended. Here is the data regarding how many people viewed those sessions:

- Session 127, "Sainly Dismemberment" - 47 total views, 36 unique viewers (individual IP addresses)
- Session 350, "Saints and Sermons" - 27 total views, 21 unique viewers
- Session 426, "Saints and Animals" - 45 total views, 33 unique viewers

### Reminder: International Medieval Congress, Leeds, Digital Access

If you registered for IMC, you still have time to view the variety of hagiography related presentations, including our sponsored session listed below. IMC 2022 event platform will close Wednesday, August 31st.

Session: 512 SPIRITUAL SPACE AND PHYSICAL PLACE: DEFINING AND TRANSCENDING BOUNDARIES IN THE MEDIEVAL WORLD

Organizer: Kathryn Gerry, Department of Art History, Bowdoin College, Brunswick  
Moderator: Lucy Donkin, Departments of History & History of Art, University of Bristol

- Paper -a: Place and the Diaspora Imagination: The Dura Europos Synagogue at Late Antique Boundaries of Space and Time (Language: English), Sean P. Burrus, Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Bowdoin College, Maine
- Paper -b: The Armchair Time Traveler: Crossing Chronological Boundaries in Matthew Paris' Pictorial Hagiography (Dublin, Trinity College MS 177) (Language: English), Kathryn Gerry
- Paper -c: Blurring the Boundaries of Lusignan Cyprus: Saints' Icons within Multi-Confessional Communities (Language: English), Lisa Mahoney, Department of History of Art & Architecture, DePaul University, Illinois

**We are moving our  
listserv!**

Be sure to sign up for the new mailing list so you don't miss out. See instructions here: [https://www.hagiographysociety.org/?page\\_id=582](https://www.hagiographysociety.org/?page_id=582)

Starting on September 1st, all announcements will go out on the new listserv and the old one will be demobilized.







## ICMS, May 2023

The Hagiography Society will sponsor four sessions at International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, May 2023. Please note that these sessions are in person.

### **Saints and their Day Jobs (paper session)**

Inviting submissions on the broad topic of Saints and Work. Bridget of Kildare did dairy work, Paul made tents, and Julian was a hospitaller whom some compare to Oedipus! Benedict enjoined his monks to work and pray. How did work function in medieval accounts of the saints' lives? Did it add to their saintly portfolios or detract from them? What about it was worldly, and what led them to the other world? Related topics are welcome as well. Session organizer: Thomas R. Liszka, trl1@psu.edu

### **The Two Faces of Illness: Suffering and Miraculous Healings by Holy Individuals (paper session)**

Many saintly figures were afflicted by chronic and incurable illnesses, wounds, or crippling disabilities that they endured willingly within the paradigm of holy suffering. At the same time many of them performed miraculous healings while still alive. This session focuses on saintly figures from a range of religious traditions who combined these two faces of illness. How did they negotiate their own illnesses or disabilities in a life of service and devotion? Did their own illnesses condition the way they approached other sufferers and offer miraculous healings? How did others view their illnesses and how did they approach them in search of healing miracles? Session organizer: Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, renatebk80@gmail.com

### **Hagiographies as Relics: Medieval Vitae Rendered as Efficacious and Curative (paper session)**

While a saint's text does not commonly serve as their relic in medieval hagiographies, the rendering of the vita as efficacious is not entirely uncommon. In texts like the Life of Margaret of Antioch, the saints' words were believed to channel the grace she had when she was living, even beyond her death. In addition, in the case of the Life of Ida of Leuven, reading the vita was believed to be a performance of salvation, one that could facilitate affective and bodily healing. The panel seeks to explore these and/or other medieval hagiographical texts that were believed to be efficacious and curative. Session organizer: Ella Johnson, johnsonellal@sau.edu

### **Teaching the Saints (roundtable)**

This roundtable focuses on teaching auto-hagiography, an elastic category that might include Augustine's Confessions, Angela of Foligno's Memorial, Margery Kempe's Book, for example, and which sometimes raises complex questions about authorship and audience. Teaching auto-hagiography presents challenges and opportunities that both overlap with and differ from other sorts of hagiographical writings. We welcome papers that consider difficulties that emerge in the teaching of such texts as well as illustrations of productive ways of reading auto-hagiography. Session organizer: Anna Harrison, annaharrison@lmu.edu

**Not receiving our CFPs to your inbox? With new security measures, many important emails (dues, announcements) are returned to us undelivered. Please add the following emails to your Contacts (instructions at [https://www.hagiographysociety.org/?page\\_id=582](https://www.hagiographysociety.org/?page_id=582)):**

- [communications@hagiographysociety.org](mailto:communications@hagiographysociety.org)
- [mailinglist@hagiographysociety.org](mailto:mailinglist@hagiographysociety.org)
- [outreach@hagiographysociety.org](mailto:outreach@hagiographysociety.org)
- [secretary@hagiographysociety.org](mailto:secretary@hagiographysociety.org)
- [no.reply@oneanddone.com](mailto:no.reply@oneanddone.com)



## Other CFPs and Conferences

**CFP: International Medieval Congress, Leeds, 3-6 July, 2023.** The Norse Hagiography Network invites you to submit abstracts to our series of organized panels: **Savvy Sainthood: The Networks and Entanglements of Old Norse-Icelandic Hagiography**

Saints—their biographies and bodies—were used for various agendas in the Nordic Middle Ages. A saintly person could not successfully become a saint without the work of a series of networks and entanglements, both in life and after death. Only with the aid of an interconnected system within the medieval Christian Church could the process of collecting miracles, putting them to parchment, disseminating relics, and progressing through the canonization process successfully transpire. Once canonized, saints' vitae and relics were often used for political means in order to establish entanglements between Church and crown, or between Church and certain families; to build pilgrimage routes that would bring currency to specific churches; or to strengthen the validity of origin stories. We invite abstracts for papers exploring these and other phenomena related to the International Medieval Congress' 2023 theme, "Networks and Entanglements." Potential topics and themes include but are not limited to:

Strand I: Norse Hagiography: Networks

- Saints and political networks
- Saints and religious networks
- Manuscript and scribal networks
- Pilgrimage
- Monastic networks

Strand II: Norse Hagiography: Entanglements

- Entanglements between the global and the local
- Entanglements between Church and crown/laity
- Translation and adaptation
- Unwanted entanglements
- Literary borrowings

Please send your paper abstract of approximately 250 words to Natasha Bradley

([natasha.bradley@lincoln.ox.ac.uk](mailto:natasha.bradley@lincoln.ox.ac.uk)) and Tiffany Nicole White ([tiffany.white@berkeley.edu](mailto:tiffany.white@berkeley.edu)), specifying in which strand you believe your paper would fit best, no later than September 15th.

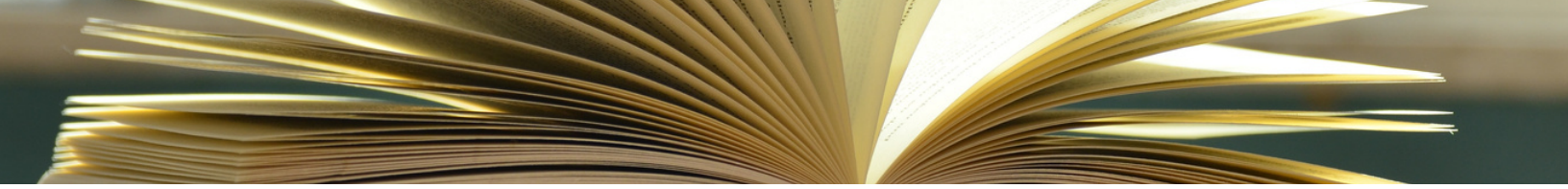
**The Heroic Age: A JOURNAL OF EARLY MEDIEVAL NORTHWESTERN EUROPE** is delighted to release their general and themed CALL FOR PAPERS for 2022-2024.

Themed subjects include:

1.) Teaching the Early Middle Ages: The Heroic Age: A Journal of Early Medieval Northwestern Europe invites submissions on Teaching the Early Middle Ages, broadly defined. We seek essays focused on pedagogical approaches and advice to introducing students to the languages, literatures, histories, and cultures from both discipline-specific and inter-disciplinary perspectives. Approaches addressing secondary, community college, and four-year student audiences are welcome. In addition, approaches to recruiting and engaging students, particularly among underrepresented demographics in medieval studies, are particularly appreciated. Submissions are due by September 30, 2022.

2.) Identity in Late Antiquity: HA: A Journal of Early Medieval Northwestern Europe invites submissions for a themed section exploring issues of identity in Late Antiquity. A period of upheaval in every sphere, Late Antiquity saw chieftains become kings, Germans imitate Romans, Romans imitate Germans, and different religious expressions—whether within Roman Christianity, traditional Roman religion, or the religions of those the Romans conquered. This section looks to explore all issues of identity (gender, sexuality, class, ethnogenesis, religious, culture, etc.) as expressed in Northwestern Europe (Gaul/Francia, Britain, Early Medieval England, Ireland, the Low Countries, Scandinavia, etc.) during Late Antiquity (for our purposes here 284 CE to 800 CE) as expressed through humanly created media (art, literature, language, material culture, political and social structures). Submissions are due May 31, 2023.

3.) Global Contexts and Contact: HA: A Journal of Early Medieval Northwestern Europe invites submissions for a themed section on the subject of Early Medieval Northwestern Europe and global contexts/contacts (cont.)



We welcome essays that focus on ideas, perceptions, and diverse connections and interactions between the peoples of Northwestern Europe and the rest of the world. Submissions are due by May 31, 2024.

CFP and submission information also available at <https://www.heroicage.org/>

**June 12-15th, 2023, Mysticism & Lived Experience Network's Annual Conference, Online: Amusement, Joy, and Having a Good Time in Mystical Texts**

Mystics who suffered, through illness, asceticism, the withdrawal of divine grace, the ruthlessness of their critics, or just from the harshness of life, often dominate our readings of the texts of and about mystics. While these are crucial aspects of their experience, what is often overlooked are the moments of happiness and contentment that also exist in these works.

The M&LEN 2023 Annual Conference will answer Amy Hollywood's call to not only speak of suffering and pain in relation to female mystical lives, but also of joy. We will be exploring the "lighter" moments, looking at how mystical texts discuss happiness, joy, amusement, playfulness, and the enjoyment of life, as well as how pain and suffering are transformed into joy in some works. We welcome papers on subjects including but not limited to:

- Expressions of joy
- Playing, dancing, singing
- Ecstatic experiences
- Communal happiness
- Positive emotions in response to negative experiences
- Release from worldly bonds
- The sexualisation of mystical joy

It is our hope that this year's papers will also be expanded into contributions to an edited collection on this theme.

Accepted proposals will be organized into workshopping groups in order to share their progress with the other speakers in their session, and to work towards cohesion of theme.

With this in mind, we seek proposals for 15-20-minute papers, exploring the theme of amusement, joy, and having a good time in mystical texts, as well as for a chapter on the same theme. Please submit abstracts of up to 500 words each, along with a brief biography to AJ Langley and Einat Klafter at [lifeandmystics@gmail.com](mailto:lifeandmystics@gmail.com) by 7 October 2022.

## Upcoming Conferences and Workshops

**September 21-24th, 2022, "The Ancient Novel: Roads Less Travelled," Ghent, Belgium (In person and online)**

Sixth International Conference on the Ancient Novel, with the theme 'Roads less travelled', has now been finalized. You can view the program at <https://www.novelsaints.ugent.be/.../ICAN-VI-programme-1.pdf>. Registration is open until 1st September 2022 (5pm CET) for in person participation and until 14th September 2022 (5pm CET) for online participation, and you are welcome to join us either in person or online. You can register via <https://www.novelsaints.ugent.be/ican-vi/>.

The conference will take place in one of the most beautiful historic conference venues in Ghent and indeed beyond: Thagaste, an (operative) Augustinian monastery in the heart of the medieval city center, hosting not only atmospheric meeting rooms but also a delightful inner courtyard, light-filled cloisters, a historic library, and a Baroque church.

The conference will feature ca. 100 speakers distributed over 36 thematic panels. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact us at [icanvi@ugent.be](mailto:icanvi@ugent.be)





# The Power of the Locale and the Revisitation of Late Medieval Sainthood

Carmen Florea, Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania

*This newsletter's guest columnist is Professor Carmen Florea, whose recent monograph *The Late Medieval Cult of the Saints: Universal Developments within Local Contexts* was just published in the *Hagiography Society's Sanctity in Global Perspective* book series. Here is a link to further information about her book. <https://www.routledge.com/The-Late-Medieval-Cult-of-the-Saints-Universal-Developments-within-Local/Florea/p/book/9780367672843>*

A paradoxical image emerges from a comparison of parochial patron saints with mendicant saints in late medieval Transylvania. Neither the Dominicans nor Franciscans—the great modernizers of sanctity—chose to promote saints of their own orders by making them the patrons of local churches. This was in spite of the fact that they were both establishing strong networks of houses in the kingdom of Hungary to which medieval Transylvania belonged and experiencing significant success in winning the canonizations of saints of their own orders. This remained the case even in the fifteenth century, when the Observant reform was sweeping the region.

One notable exception worth considering is Saint Elizabeth of Hungary/Thuringia, canonized in 1235. Sources from 1300 show that Elizabeth became the patron of the Franciscan friary established in Sibiu (Hermannstadt, Nagyszeben), one of the most important Transylvanian towns. Sibiu, recently formed as a result of Saxon colonization and royal privileges granting it autonomy, proved a particularly apt protector for the friars. As Gábor Klaniczay's recent research shows, Elizabeth, descended from the Hungarian Arpadian dynasty, was also a truly universal saint venerated not only in Hungary (hence Elizabeth of Hungary), but also beyond in Germany (hence Elizabeth of Thuringia). Her multiple regional identities perfectly suited the multicultural identity of Sibiu and also the friars' charitable focus on assisting the poor.

As I discuss in my recent book on cults in medieval Transylvania, centralized and international religious organizations like the mendicant orders distinguished themselves through an ingenious policy of adaptation to local religious realities. Both Dominicans and Franciscans remained faithful to the traditional holy figures of the Virgin Mary, the Apostles, and early medieval saints dominating the region's religious landscape. Nevertheless, subtle changes in their saintly strategies can be detected: the mendicants favoured cults that were gaining preeminence in Transylvania—such the cults of Holy Cross and Saint Nicholas—precisely at the time they were settling in the region.

The most interesting transformation occurred when the Observant movement took hold, leading to the reformation of many male convents and the formation of new female houses. Observant Dominicans promoted holy protectors who embodied the exigencies of a cloistered, ascetic, and penitential way of life. These included Egidius, Anthony the Great, and Mary Magdalene. The Observant Franciscans took a different path. (cont.)



## The Power of the Locale and the Revisitation of Late Medieval Sainthood, cont.

They reinvigorated the universal and long-established cult of the Virgin Mary by promoting new devotions to, for example, Our Lady of the Snows who became the patron of their friary in Cluj (Kolozsvár, Klausenburg), and the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin, highly revered in the convent of Șumuleu Ciuc (Csíksomlyó).

Analysis of the competition between the Dominicans and Franciscans, and the more general and often fierce competition between mendicants and parish clergy, clearly reveals how saints were used in the process of identity construction. The patron saints of mendicant convents always differed from those of the nearby parish churches and became visible emblems of mendicant identity. Their identities were marked also by recently canonized mendicant saints such as Bernadino, Bonaventure, and Catherine of Siena. Significantly, these new cults were largely confined within the wall of the reformed friaries and nunneries and were seldom promoted outside the mendicant churches. This was a cloistered sanctity that both shaped and enforced specific identities. It also signalled the equilibrium the friars struck between their propagation of refashioned traditional models and new models of saintliness. Exploring saints' cults in Transylvania reveals how the mendicants transformed archaic approaches to sainthood and made the borders more permeable between Latin Christendom and a region that had been previously deemed marginal to it.





## New Books

Archambeau, Nicole. *Souls Under Siege: Stories of War, Plague, and Confession in Fourteenth-Century Provence*. Cornell University Press, 2021.

Bullitta, Dario, and Natalie M. Van Deusen. *Sainthood, Scriptoria, and Secular Erudition in Medieval and Early Modern Scandinavia. Essays in Honour of Kirsten Wolf*. Brepols, 2022.

Harrison, Anna. *Thousands and Thousands of Lovers: Sense of Community Among the Nuns of Helfta*. Liturgical Press, 2022.

Lampadaridi, Anna, Vincent Déroche, and Christian Høgel, eds. *L'histoire comme elle se présentait dans l'hagiographie byzantine et médiévale*. Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 2022.

Martín, José Carlos, Patrick Henriët, Álvaro Cancela Cilleruelo, A. Castro Correa, Carmen Esteban Martínez, and Carmen Codoñer Merino. *Hagiographica Hispana regnorum Aragonum et Castellae Legionisque saeculorum IX-XIII: vitae sanctorum, inventiones et translationes, libri miraculorum, hymni*. Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis 310. Brepols, 2022.

Otaño Gracia, Nahir I., and Daniel Armenti. *Women's Lives: Self-Representation, Reception and Appropriation in the Middle Ages*. University of Wales Press, 2022.

Pierre de Vaux, Perrine de Baume, and Colette. *Two lives of Saint Colette: With a Selection of Letters by, to, and about Colette*. Ed. and trans. Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski. Iter Press, 2022.

Raman, Srilata. *The Transformation of Tamil Religion: Ramalinga Swamigal (1823-1874) and Modern Dravidian Sainthood*. Routledge, 2022.

Reginald of Durham. *The Life and Miracles of Saint Godric, Hermit of Finchale*. Ed. and trans. Margaret Coombe. Clarendon Press, 2022.

Wickstrom, John B. *Fiction, Memory, and Identity in the Cult of St. Maurus, 830–1270*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2022.

Have a CFP, new book, or other news of interest to our members?

Please send an email addressed to the Communications Chair, Lydia Walker at [lmwalker@barton.edu](mailto:lmwalker@barton.edu)

